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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES OF BOOKS.

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WELTGESCHICHTE DER KUNST bis zur Erbauung der Sophienkirche. Grundriss von LUDWIG VON SYBEL. Mit einer Farbtafel und 380 Textbildern. 8vo, pp. xii-479. Marburg, 1888, N. G. Elwert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung.

The writer says, in the preface, *Die Geschichte der alten Kunst nach ihren Epochen ist noch nicht geschrieben worden. . . Unsere Weltgeschichte der Kunst will neben der üblichen ethnographischen und systematischen Darstellungsweise die echthistorische in ihr Recht setzen, welche den Stoff nach den Epochen ordnet, damit die Entwicklung rein vor das Auge trete.* The attempt to give a clear view of all contemporary developments of art in East and West, to show their relationships and distinctions, and to find a general character in each one, has never really been attempted as Von Sybel attempts it in this volume. The usual ethnographic and geographic method is at once the easiest to carry out, and the least questionable in its bearings and results. The universal and comparative history, as we might term Von Sybel's, is one that can be safely attempted only at a very advanced stage in our knowledge of the subject. Perhaps this stage is being reached in ancient art; perhaps such a work as this will hasten its coming. It is certainly an attempt most interesting, and according to a method which should in future find many able representatives, in which far more depends on the talent of the author than in usual histories. But the novelty is not confined to the text. The illustrations, numerous and of good size, are with few exceptions executed according to the latest method of mechanically reproducing photographs, called in America the half-tone process. As Von Sybel remarks, this is the first history of ancient art which makes use to any extent of a photographic process for its illustration. The result is strikingly interesting. A type is here given which it is to be hoped will be quickly followed. The style of the execution of these illustrations is of the highest excellence, and in pleasing contrast to a history of art recently issued by an American house which makes a boast of using the same process throughout, and whose illustrations are of so vile a character as to merit instant destruction.

The author divides his history into three parts: (1) The Oriental period; (2) the Hellenic period; (3) the Roman period.

The Oriental period has three divisions: (a) groundworks; (b) second millennium, of universal commerce and interchange; (c) Assyrian dominion.

The Hellenic period naturally falls into: (1) archaic Greek; (2) the great masters; (3) the post-Alexandrian age. The Roman period comprises: (a) the last century of the Republic; (b) the Empire; (c) art in the service of the Catholic religion.

The style and arrangement are attractive, and the monuments chosen for illustration and description are typical and well selected.

A. L. F., JR.

#### ORIENTAL ARCHÆOLOGY.

UN PALAIS CHALDÉEN, par M. HEUZEY, del'Institut. 18mo (Petite Bibliothèque d'art et d'archéologie). Paris, 1888, Ernest Leroux.

This little volume, the publication of a paper read before the French Society of Architects, is all the more welcome that the official report on the excavations at Telloh has never been completely published. The first part of the book describes the royal palace at Telloh as excavated by M. de Sarzec. The ground-plan here given shows that the general arrangement was essentially the same as that followed by the Assyrians, over two thousand years afterwards. The great difference seems to have been in the decoration; for in the Chaldaean palace nothing permanent, corresponding to the sculptures and frescos of the Assyrian palace, appears to have covered the plain brick walls: also, there are no signs of the use of arches and vaults, as in Assyria. The rooms are grouped around three courts belonging respectively to the men's apartments, the Harem, and the dependencies. The oblong shape of the entire building is peculiar, being made slightly in the form of a barrel by the concave outline of the two longer walls.

As to construction, the most interesting fact elicited by these excavations was from another and a neighboring mound, where M. de Sarzec discovered, in position and perfect preservation up to a considerable height, two large brick piers of about the same thickness as those of mediaeval cathedrals. Each was formed by the grouping, so that each circle touched but did not interpenetrate, of four columns built up of bricks so variously and carefully moulded that no two joints coincided, showing an ingenuity from which a modern architect might take hints. These are the first free masonry-supports found in any Babylonian or Assyrian building, and the discovery opens a wide field for conjecture, giving us a much higher idea of the possibilities of Mesopotamian architecture.

The second part of the volume is taken up with the discussion of an interesting piece of early Babylonian sculpture found in another mound, to the illustration of which M. Heuzey brings a great wealth of knowledge of Oriental antiquities, especially of the early seal-cylinders.

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